

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the specification by replacing paragraphs 0002, 0008, 0011, 0012, 0013, 0015, 0020, and 0025 with the following amended paragraphs:

[0002] For a long time, cross-country skis ~~have~~ had been used with rudimentary devices for binding the boot to the ski. The boot sole ~~had~~, for example, a tongue or a binding strap extending beyond the front end of the boot and which was held in a lock arranged forward from the position of the boot in relation to the ski.

[0008] An object of the invention is therefore to provide a cross-country ski which ~~which~~ provides for better transmission of forces on the ski edges, as well as optimal stability.

[0011] FIG. 1 shows a system for cross-country ski system including a ski 10, only a central zone of which is shown, the central zone being spaced from the ends of the ski. A device 12 for binding a cross-country ski boot 14 is mounted on this central zone of the ski. More specifically, the binding device 12 occupies, in this central zone, a location that corresponds to at least the size of the device viewed from above.

[0012] The binding device 12 is, for example, similar to that described in the document FR-2.739.788 and family member US-6,017,050, which will be referred to for a detailed description. This device includes a front jaw 16 in which a front bar 18 of the boot 14 is adapted to be locked to enable the attachment of the boot to the ski by means of articulation about the transverse axis of the bar. For this purpose, this binding device 12 enables the boot heel to be lifted from the ski. The device 12 also includes longitudinally, at the rear of the jaw 16, an elastic return mechanism that includes an articulated connecting rod 20 adapted, for example, to hook a rear bar (not shown) arranged under the sole 22 of the boot 14. Finally, in the rear extension of the connecting rod, the binding device 12 also includes [[a]] an upwardly projecting guiding edge 24, or rib, the profile of which is complementary to a corresponding downwardly facing groove (not shown in cross section in FIG. 2) formed under in the boot sole.

[0013] According to the invention, the arrangement of the binding device 12 on the ski 10 is such that it is arranged transversely on both sides of the position of the binding device 12 [,.] of the portions of the upper surface 26 of the ski that form longitudinally extending support surfaces 28 which corresponding support surfaces 30 of the boot sole are adapted to contact directly.

[0015] FIGS. 1 and 2 show the case where the ski has an upper surface 26 that is essentially flat. In this case, the binding device 12 is arranged in a position that is transversely at the center of the ski. In this case, the location of the binding device 12, that is, the portion of the ski upper surface [,.] on which the binding device 12 is to be arranged, is located at the same height as the direct support lateral surfaces 28.

[0020] In the example shown in FIG. 3, the difference in the level between the binding location and the two upper surfaces of the shoulders progressively varies so as to progressively disappear toward the front and rear ends of the shoulders (which therefore do not extend over the entire ski length). Conversely, for example in the case where binding location results in a longitudinally extending recess of the ski upper surface, the function of the front and rear ends of the recess with the ski upper surface can form a step.

[0025] However, in the example of embodiment shown in FIGS. 5 to 7, it can be provided that the lateral support surfaces 28, instead of being flat or planar, have a curvature complementary to a curvature of the lower surface 30 of the boot sole.